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SOUTHEAST ASIA  
REPORT

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**PROJECT**  
**C**ontemporary  
**H**istorical  
**E**valuation of  
**C**ombat  
**O**perations  
**REPORT**

**USAF Civic Action in RVN**

**17 MARCH 1969**

**HQ PACAF**  
**Directorate, Tactical Evaluation**  
**CHECO Division**

**Prepared by:**

**Major A. W. Thompson**  
**Project CHECO 7th AF, DOAC**

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## PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia has resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower have involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that, as a priority, must be collected, documented, and analyzed as to current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements at Hq 7AF and 7/13AF, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical evaluation and documentation of USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in Southeast Asia combat operations. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and evaluation which is being accomplished. Along with the other CHECO publications, this is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in SEA.



MILTON B. ADAMS, Major General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

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FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

*Warren H. Peterson*

WARREN H. PETERSON, Colonel, USAF  
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Directorate, Tactical Evaluation  
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g.	AFNIN	l.	AFSDC . . . . . 1
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(3)	AFNINCC . . . . . 1	(3)	AFSMS . . . . . 1
(4)	AFNINED . . . . . 4	(4)	AFSPD . . . . . 1
		(5)	AFSSS . . . . . 1
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		m.	AFTAC . . . . . 1



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(2) AFXDOC . . . . .	1
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(4) AFXDOL . . . . .	1
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(7) AFXOSN . . . . .	1
(8) AFXOSO . . . . .	1
(9) AFXOSS . . . . .	1
(10) AFXOSV . . . . .	1
(11) AFXOTR . . . . .	1
(12) AFXOTW . . . . .	1
(13) AFXOTZ . . . . .	1
(14) AFXPD . . . . .	6

(a) AFXPPGS . . . . . 3

(d) USAFSOF

1. DO . . . . .	1
2. DI . . . . .	1

(3) AIR DIVISIONS

(a) 831AD(DO) . . . . .	2
(b) 832AD(DO) . . . . .	2
(c) 833AD(DDO) . . . . .	2
(d) 835AD(DO) . . . . .	2
(e) 836AD(DO) . . . . .	2
(f) 838AD . . . . .	

1. DO . . . . .	1
2. DOCP . . . . .	1

(g) 839AD(DO) . . . . .	2
(h) 840AD . . . . .	2

3. MAJOR COMMANDS

(4) WINGS

a. TAC

(1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DO . . . . .	1
(b) DPL . . . . .	2
(c) DOCC . . . . .	1
(d) DORQ . . . . .	1
(e) DIO . . . . .	1

(2) AIR FORCES

(a) 9AF

1. DO . . . . .	1
2. DP . . . . .	1

(b) 12AF

1. DORF . . . . .	1
2. DP . . . . .	1
3. DI . . . . .	1

(c) 19AF

1. DO . . . . .	1
2. DP . . . . .	1
3. DA-C . . . . .	1

(a) 1SOW(DO) . . . . .	1
(b) 4TFW(DO) . . . . .	1
(c) 15TFW(DO) . . . . .	1
(d) 23TFW(DOI) . . . . .	1
(e) 27TFW(DOP) . . . . .	1
(f) 33TFW(DOI) . . . . .	1
(g) 49TFW(DCOI) . . . . .	1
(h) 64TFW . . . . .	1
(i) 67TRW(C) . . . . .	1
(j) 75TRW(DO) . . . . .	1
(k) 78FW(WGODC) . . . . .	1
(l) 82CSPW(DOCH) . . . . .	1
(m) 123TRW . . . . .	1
(n) 140TFW(CA) . . . . .	1
(o) 313TAW(DOPL) . . . . .	1
(p) 316TAW(DOP) . . . . .	1
(q) 317TAW(EX) . . . . .	1
(r) 363TRW . . . . .	1
(s) 464TAW(DO) . . . . .	1
(t) 474TFW(TFOX) . . . . .	1
(u) 479TFW . . . . .	1
(v) 516TAW(DOPL) . . . . .	1
(w) 4410CCTW(DOTR) . . . . .	1
(x) 4442CCTW(DO) . . . . .	1
(y) 4453CCTW(DO) . . . . .	1
(z) 4500ABW(DO) . . . . .	1
(aa) 4510CCTW(DO16-I) . . . . .	1

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(bb) 4525FWW(FWOA) . . . 1  
(cc) 4531TFW(DOI) . . . 1  
(dd) 4554CCTW(DOI) . . . 1

## (5) TAC CENTERS, SCHOOLS

### (a) USAFTAWC

1. DA . . . . . 2

### (b) USAFTARC

1. DID . . . . . 2

### (c) USAFTALC

1. DCRL . . . . . 2

### (d) USAFTFWC

1. CRCD . . . . . 2

(e) USAFSOC(DO) . . . . 2

(f) USAFAGOS(DAB-C) . . 2

## b. SAC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DOPL . . . . . 1

(b) DPLF . . . . . 1

(c) DM . . . . . 1

(d) DI . . . . . 1

### (2) AIR FORCES

(a) 2AF(DICS) . . . . . 1

(b) 8AF(C) . . . . . 1

(c) 15AF . . . . . 1

### (3) AIR DIVISIONS

(a) 3AD(DO) . . . . . 3

## c. MAC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) MAOID . . . . . 1

(b) MAOCO . . . . . 1

(c) MAFOI . . . . . 1

(d) MACOA . . . . . 1

### (2) AIR FORCES

#### (a) 21AF

1. ODC . . . . . 1

2. OCXI . . . . . 1

#### (b) 22AF

1. ODC . . . . . 1

2. OCXI . . . . . 1

### (3) AIR DIVISIONS

(a) 322AD . . . . . 1

### (4) WINGS

#### (a) 375AAWG

1. ODC . . . . . 1

#### (b) 89MAWG

1. ODC . . . . . 1

#### (c) 60MAWG

1. ODC . . . . . 1

2. OXI . . . . . 1

#### (d) 61MAWG

1. ODC . . . . . 1

2. OIN . . . . . 1



(e) 62MAWG	(d) AAVS
1. OCXP . . . . . 1	1. AVODOD . . . . . 1
2. OOPT . . . . . 1	
(f) 63MAWG	d. ADC
1. O. . . . . 1	(1) HEADQUARTERS
2. OCXCI . . . . . 1	(a) ADODC . . . . . 1
(g) 435MAWG	(b) ADOOP . . . . . 1
1. ODC . . . . . 1	(c) ADOTT . . . . . 1
2. OTI . . . . . 1	(d) ADLCC . . . . . 1
(h) 436MAWG	(2) AIR FORCES
1. O. . . . . 1	(a) 1AF
2. OCXC . . . . . 1	1. DO . . . . . 1
(i) 437MAWG	2. DP . . . . . 1
1. ODC . . . . . 1	(b) 4AF
2. OCXI . . . . . 1	1. DO . . . . . 1
(j) 438MAWG	2. DP . . . . . 1
1. ODC . . . . . 1	(c) 10AF
2. OCXC . . . . . 1	1. DO . . . . . 1
(k) 445MAWG	2. PDP-P. . . . . 1
1. OC. . . . . 1	(d) 14Aerosp Force
2. WDO-PLI . . . . . 1	1. 140DC-I. . . . . 2
(5) MAC SERVICES	(e) AF Iceland . . . . . 2
(a) AWS	(3) AIR DIVISIONS
1. AWW. . . . . 1	(a) 25AD . . . . . 2
2. AFCSPI. . . . . 1	(b) 26AD(OIN). . . . . 2
(b) ARRS	(c) 27AD . . . . . 2
1. ARXLR . . . . . 1	(d) 28AD(OIN). . . . . 2
(c) ACGS	(e) 29AD(ODC). . . . . 2
1. AGOV. . . . . 1	(f) 31AD . . . . . 2
	(g) 32AD(ODC-A). . . . . 2
	(h) 33AD(OIN). . . . . 2
	(i) 34AD(OIN). . . . . 2
	(j) 35AD(CCR). . . . . 2
	(k) 36AD(OIN). . . . . 2
	(l) 37AD(ODC). . . . . 2

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## e. ATC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) ATXDC. . . . . 1

## f. AFLC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) MCFH . . . . . 1  
(b) MCGH . . . . . 1  
(c) MCOO . . . . . 1

## g. AFSC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) SCLAP. . . . . 2  
(b) SCS-6. . . . . 1  
(c) SCTPL. . . . . 1  
(d) SCEH . . . . . 2  
(e) ASD/ASJT . . . . 2  
(f) ESD/ESWV . . . . 2  
(g) ADTC/ADP . . . . 2  
(h) RADC/EMOEL . . . 2

## h. AFCS

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) CSOCH. . . . . 5

## i. USAFSS

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) ODC. . . . . 1  
(b) CHO. . . . . 5

### (2) SUBORDINATE UNITS

(a) Eur Scty Rgn

1. OPD-P. . . . . 1

(b) 6940 Scty Wg

1. OOD. . . . . 1

## j. AAC

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) ALDOC-A . . . . . 2

## k. USAFSO

(1) COH . . . . . 1  
(2) OOP . . . . . 1

## 1. PACAF

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) DP. . . . . 1  
(b) DI. . . . . 1  
(c) DO. . . . . 1  
(d) DPL . . . . . 4  
(e) CSH . . . . . 1  
(f) DOTECH . . . . . 6  
(g) DE. . . . . 1  
(h) DM. . . . . 1

### (2) AIR FORCES

#### (a) 5AF

1. DOPP. . . . . 1  
2. DP. . . . . 1

#### (b) 7AF

1. DO. . . . . 1  
2. DIXA. . . . . 1  
3. DPL . . . . . 1  
4. TACC. . . . . 1  
5. DOAC. . . . . 2

#### (c) 13AF

1. DDO . . . . . 1  
2. DXIH. . . . . 1  
3. DPL . . . . . 1

#### (d) 7AF/13AF

1. CHECO . . . . . 3



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## (3) AIR DIVISIONS

(a) 313AD(DOP) . . . 2  
 (b) 314AD(DOP) . . . 2  
 (c) 327AD. . . . . 2  
 (d) 834AD. . . . . 2

## (c) 17AF

1. ODC . . . . . 1  
 2. OID . . . . . 1

## (4) WINGS

(a) 3TFW(DCOP) . . . 1  
 (b) 8TFW(DCOA) . . . 1  
 (c) 12TFW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (d) 14SOW(DCO) . . . 1  
 (e) 31TFW(DCOA) . . . 1  
 (f) 35TFW. . . . . 1  
 (g) 37TFW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (h) 56SOW. . . . . 1  
 (i) 315SOW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (j) 347TFW(DCOOT) . . . 1  
 (k) 355TFW(DCOC) . . . 1  
 (l) 366TFW . . . . . 1  
 (m) 388TFW(DCO) . . . 1  
 (n) 405FW(DCOA) . . . 1  
 (o) 432TRW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (p) 460TRW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (q) 475TFW(DCO) . . . 1  
 (r) 483TAW(DCO) . . . 1  
 (s) 553RW(DCOI) . . . 1  
 (t) 633SOW . . . . . 1  
 (u) 6400 Test Sq . . . 1

## (3) WINGS

(a) 10TRW(OIN/50A) . . . 1  
 (b) 20TFW(CACC) . . . 1  
 (c) 26TRW(C) . . . . . 1  
 (d) 36TFW(CADS) . . . . . 1  
 (e) 48TFW(DCOTS) . . . . . 1  
 (f) 50TFW(CACC) . . . . . 1  
 (g) 66TRW(DCOIN-T) . . . . 1  
 (h) 81TFW . . . . . 1  
 (i) 401TFW(DCOI) . . . . . 1  
 (j) 513TAW(OID) . . . . . 1  
 (k) 601TCW. . . . . 1  
 (l) 7101ABW(DCO-CP) . . . . 1  
 (m) 7149TFW(DCOI) . . . . . 1  
 (n) 7272FTW(CAAC) . . . . . 1

## (5) OTHER UNITS

(a) Task Force ALPHA  
     1. DXI. . . . . 1  
 (b) 504TASG(CA) . . . 1

## m. USAFE

### (1) HEADQUARTERS

(a) ODC/OA . . . . . 1  
 (b) ODC/OTA. . . . . 1  
 (c) OOT. . . . . 1  
 (d) XDC. . . . . 1

### (2) AIR FORCES

(a) 3AF(ODC) . . . . . 2  
 (b) 16AF . . . . . 2

## 4. SEPARATE OPERATING AGENCIES

a. AFAFC (SAA-12) . . . . . 1  
 b. AFSDC (HCAA) . . . . . 2  
 c. ACIC

(1) ACOMC . . . . . 2

d. ARPC (RPCAS-22) . . . . . 2  
 e. AFRES

(1) AFROP . . . . . 2

### f. USAFA

(1) CA. . . . . 2  
 (2) CMT . . . . . 1  
 (3) DFH . . . . . 1

### g. AU

(1) AUL(SE)-69-108. . . . . 2  
 (2) ASI (ASHAF-A) . . . . . 2  
 (3) ASI (ASD-1) . . . . . 1  
 (4) ACSC-SA . . . . . 1

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## 5. MILITARY DEPARTMENTS, UNIFIED AND SPECIFIED COMMANDS, AND JOINT STAFFS

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e.	COMMANDANT, MARINE CORPS.	1
f.	CINCONAD.	1
g.	DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY.	1
h.	JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF	1
i.	JSTPS	1
j.	CINCPAC	1
k.	SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.	1
l.	CINCAFSTRIKE.	1
m.	USCINMEAFSA.	1
n.	USCINCEUR	1
o.	COMUSFORAZ.	1
p.	COMUSJAPAN.	1
q.	COMUSKOREA.	1
r.	COMUSMACTHAI.	1
s.	COMUSMACV	1
t.	USCINCSO.	1
u.	COMUSTDC.	1
v.	CINCSTRIKE.	1

## 6. SCHOOLS

a.	Senior USAF Rep, National War College	1
b.	Senior USAF Rep, Industrial College of the Armed Forces	1
c.	Senior USAF Rep, Armed Forces Staff College	1
d.	Senior USAF Rep, US Naval War College	1
e.	Senior USAF Rep, Naval Amphibious School.	1
f.	Senior USAF Rep, Marine Corps Education Center.	1
g.	Senior USAF Rep, US Army War College.	1
h.	Senior USAF Rep, US Army C&G Staff College.	1
i.	Senior USAF Rep, US Army Infantry School.	1
j.	Senior USAF Rep, US Army JFG Ctr for Special Warfare.	1



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD .....	xii
CHAPTER I - TET RECOVERY .....	1
CHAPTER II - PERSONNEL .....	17
CHAPTER III - CONTINGENCY PLANNING .....	21
CHAPTER IV - MEDICAL CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM .....	22
CHAPTER V - ACCELERATED PACIFICATION EFFORT .....	27
CHAPTER VI - ASSESSMENT .....	38
FOOTNOTES	
Foreword .....	42
Chapter I .....	42
Chapter II .....	43
Chapter III .....	44
Chapter IV .....	44
Chapter V .....	44
Chapter VI .....	45
GLOSSARY .....	46

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## FOREWORD

*"Civic Action is an integral part of our military mission in South Vietnam and requires the personal support of each commander. It is part of Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) and has two interrelated objectives: to improve the living conditions of the people so as to remove one of the underlying causes of the insurgency, and to gain and maintain the people's support of the government of Vietnam. This Military Civic Action Program complements and supports the Republic of Vietnam's Revolutionary Development Program (RDP). The military significance of the Civic Action Program was emphasized when the President placed the entire United States support of the RDP under Commander, United States Military Advisory Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV) and named a civilian with the rank of Ambassador as COMUSMACV's Deputy for Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support."*

In the initial phase of Seventh Air Force's Civic Action Program, the effort was largely limited to informal, voluntary humanitarian activities, medical aid, and some construction projects.<sup>1/</sup> In May 1966, Civic Action became an official part of the Air Force mission. At that time, its meaning and scope were defined, and an organizational structure was established, which was considered second only to combat operations.

This new program was aimed at forging a link between the peasant in the village and the central government. Historically, the peasants' loyalties were to their family, their land, and their spiritual world; consequently, they had little feeling of identification with the central government. The effort to win the hearts and minds of the people of South Vietnam was originally a civilian operation under the direction of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). By May 1967, MACV was given the responsibility for central direction of all U.S. civil and military activities in

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support of the Revolutionary Development in Vietnam.

The role of PACAF was largely limited to manning, funding, and securing transportation for the Base Civic Action Officers. Under operational control of MACV, 7AF developed a Civic Action Program comprising three phases: <sup>2/</sup>

Military Civic Action: Use of preponderantly local national military forces on projects of value to the local populace at all levels.

Community Relations: Programs to enhance mutual respect and confidence between military forces and the civilian population surrounding the military installations through committees or councils.

Humanitarian Activities: Actions by individuals or groups which involve direct donations of money, food, clothing, etc., for needy Vietnamese institutions.

The special CHECO report, "USAF Civic Action in Republic of Vietnam," dated 1 April 1968, traced the evolution of 7AF efforts in the Revolutionary Development Program through 1967. After the Tet Offensive in early 1968, the Government of Vietnam (GVN) and COMUSMACV responded to the recovery priorities created in its wake. Both agencies shifted Civic Action emphasis to humanitarian and recovery projects and ultimately, in late 1968, devised a more vigorous and ambitious goal--formalized in the Accelerated Pacification Program. This report addresses these major trends and designs for 1968, the manner in which 7AF responded to them, and the general guidelines, plans and problems associated with Seventh Air Force efforts.

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## CHAPTER I

### TET RECOVERY

The heavy fighting, which began throughout South Vietnam on 30 January 1968, followed by intermittent attacks and continued presence of Viet Cong (VC) forces, drastically reduced normal Civic Action activity. Long-range projects were shelved in favor of immediate humanitarian projects in direct support of the Vietnamese government recovery program.

On 4 February 1968, COMUSMACV dispatched a message to all Province Senior Advisors stating: <sup>1/</sup>

*"The President of Vietnam has just issued an important decree establishing the mechanism for assisting the people of Vietnam to recover from the effects of the treacherous VC Tet campaign. I desire that all MACV agencies assist and cooperate to the fullest extent with GVN agencies at all levels in achieving the objectives of this plan. I desire that you be aware of the mechanisms established by the government of Vietnam and direct that through your counter-part relationship at all levels you provide active and immediate support."*

On 8 February 1968, 7AF informed all subordinate commands of COMUSMACV's desires. Commanders were directed to: <sup>2/</sup>

- Provide active and immediate support of the GVN recovery effort.
- Appoint a liaison officer to coordinate emergency assistance with the MACV Province Senior Advisor.
- To the degree security and local resources permit, support the province recovery effort of persons victimized by the VC attack.
- Forward through normal staff channels requests for assistance from the MACV Province Senior Advisor

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beyond local base capabilities.

Funds up to \$25,000 were authorized each base and could be drawn on to support the province recovery effort.<sup>3/</sup> Seventh Air Force was authorized a total of \$426,000 of appropriated funds for Civic Action for the remainder of FY 68.

However, until MACV and the GVN assessed the problem and determined the materials required for construction, the air bases could not be certain of their funding requirements. The focal point for establishing priorities and allocating resources was at the province level, beyond the Air Force purview. Seventh Air Force funds were to be used as a supplement when needed. Initial procedures established for the control of Civic Action funds required that individual requests be submitted to 7AF, Civic Action Division, which had approval authority for requests up to \$500. Requests in excess of \$500 required 7AF Civic Action Council approval.<sup>4/</sup>

On 14 February 1968, to permit prompt USAF response to recovery efforts, base commanders were delegated as approval authorities for projects up to \$3,000, once these projects were coordinated with Province Senior Advisors. Projects in excess of \$3,000 were generally supported from GVN and Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) resources to prevent competition for GVN and CORDS funds.<sup>5/</sup>

After a project was approved, requisitions were submitted to the Base Supply Officer for the required items of supplies and equipment. This procedure required the establishment of a Civic Action Organizational Code with

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Base Supply, and prior coordination with the Comptroller to insure reimbursement of Base Supply 458 funds from the Civic Action 456 monies. <sup>6/</sup>

On 19 February 1968, the Commander, 7AF, gave the following direction to subordinate commanders: <sup>7/</sup>

*"Seventh Air Force has never had an opportunity like the present to step into the breach and aggressively support the GVN program for recovery from the VC Tet Offensive. While coordination of United States effort at province level is the responsibility of the MACV/CORDS Senior Advisor to the province chief, the responsibility of commanders to assist by bringing the full weight of U.S. efforts to bear is also clear...Your personnel must work in close liaison with local GVN officials...I expect you to give your personal attention to this important part of our total mission. All elements of the 7AF staff will support your efforts."*

The Civic Action Recovery Program was considered of sufficient importance that the 7AF Civic Action Division levied a twice-weekly requirement on the ten base Civic Action Officers to telephone their reports of progress. The reports were consolidated and distributed to field commanders and key staff officers. The consolidated report was called the "7AF Civic Action News Bulletin," and gave a recap of the entire command effort, plus a base-by-base synopsis of activities. <sup>8/</sup> This telephonic reporting system was severely hampered, because 7AF had imposed "Minimize" and contact was infrequent. It was difficult to obtain timely information, and bases resorted to sending back-up letters. In addition, most bases did not forward pertinent data. Reports were general, rather than specific, because base Civic Action officials had <sup>9/</sup> difficulty in obtaining detailed information from district or province officials.

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For the next five months, the 7AF Civic Action Program was designed almost exclusively to support the GVN Tet Recovery Program. There were four distinct phases to this effort: <sup>10/</sup>

Emergency Assistance. With more than 500,000 people dislocated, burned out, or voluntarily relocated, large concentrations gathered in the vicinity of air bases. For example, Da Nang Air Base reported that the local Refugee Division of CORDS did not have the capacity to cope with the mass of refugees swarming in from Khe Sanh and other outlying areas. Consequently, the military inherited full responsibility for medical treatment, feeding, transportation, security, and shelter. Other bases reacted with resources at their disposal, either with or without direction from higher headquarters.

Organization for Refugee Support. In this phase, which lasted approximately six weeks, semi-permanent shelters were erected in a variety of refugee camps with lumber, nails, and other materials furnished by 7AF. As the fighting persisted, or temporary sites closed, refugees were relocated to better sites. As areas were cleared of VC and declared secure, refugees gradually relocated to their hamlets.

Rebuilding Phase. The rebuilding and restoration of destroyed hamlets and villages were the major phase of the recovery program. However, this phase was hampered by the lack of assessments by District Chiefs. Assessments were not made if the people were not present to file a claim, and since many remained in refugee camps, the program was slow in gathering momentum. When the GVN certified that a family home had been destroyed, government aid in

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the form of \$VN10,000, 10 sheets of metal roofing, and 10 bags of cement was awarded. As this did not suffice for adequate homebuilding, 7AF assisted with a variety of building materials. Fortunately, Phu Cat, Pleiku, and Tuy Hoa Air Bases had a stock of materials on hand prior to the emergency. Phu Cat personnel, for example, aided in rebuilding 650 homes without resorting to appropriated funds.

Post Recovery. Public facilities and other nonpriority structures damaged during Tet were programmed for progressive restoration as conditions, funds and materials permitted.

Viewed from the framework of 7AF, assistance seemed slow in getting started. The recovery phases were not clearly definable until the second month and many limiting factors were encountered. For example, the general mobilization ordered by the GVN, whereby eligible males up to age 33 were either recalled or drafted, left several base Civil Action teams without an interpreter. Without the ability to converse with the Vietnamese representatives, Civic Action Officers were greatly handicapped. Moreover, after Tet, commanders were often reluctant to allow their personnel to volunteer for work in the hamlets, because they believed security was lacking. Also, there was a general negative reaction on the part of many U.S. personnel, since the attacks were launched from, in, or near the very outlying hamlets that were aided by base efforts. One Civic Action officer stated: <sup>11/</sup> "...some [commanders] didn't believe in a program of helping hamlet people who hadn't given warning of VC in their areas...." Perhaps the most significant limitation was simply the fact that base personnel were already working overtime at primary

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duties, augmenting security forces, or serving on sandbag details.

A relief fund to be made up of voluntary contributions and called the Tet Aggression Relief Project (TARP) was devised by COMUSMACV to assist in the immediate relief of Vietnamese war victims and to demonstrate compassion by members of the U.S. Military. The funds received were to remain at organizational levels and be used in accordance with established local procedures. The MACV program preempted a 7AF plan called 7AF Blue that had been conceived along the same lines as TARP. Seventh Air Force wanted to extend its plan, as well as the MACV plan, to include the USAF members in CONUS in an appeal to help the overall war effort. However, higher headquarters believed that such a program would not hold the same appeal throughout the Air Force as it held in Vietnam and would duplicate, in some respects, programs sponsored by agencies, such as AID, Red Cross, and other international organizations.<sup>12/</sup> TARP was conducted between 22 February and 2 March with the following results:<sup>13/</sup>

<u>BASE</u>	<u>\$US</u>	<u>\$VN</u>
Bien Hoa	2,874.80	7,905
Cam Ranh Bay	2,000.00	63,000
Nha Trang	968.69	3,695
Tuy Hoa	2,176.22	
Phan Rang	344.00	3,160
Phu Cat	1,443.68	2,500
Da Nang	4,421.21	
Binh Thuy	814.16	
Pleiku	1,506.80	14,730
Tan Son Nhut	8,248.91	24,955
TOTAL	\$ 24,798.47	\$VN 119,945

An accurate accounting of the VNAF participation in the recovery program

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was impossible. Of interest, however, was the fact that the GVN and the populace furnished almost all labor for the recovery effort from within its own resources. At five of the six bases where the VNAF were located, they bore the brunt of assembling refugees and providing assistance. The increase in VNAF involvement occurred essentially for two reasons. First, VNAF dependents residing off base were victimized along with the general public. Second, security restrictions held USAF personnel on base, while the VNAF were not similarly affected. The following highlights some of the VNAF recovery achievements: <sup>14/</sup>

Binh Thuy. The Commander and his staff visited a hamlet hit by VNAF bombs during the Tet Offensive, and issued food, clothing, and cots to the victims. He also prepared a taped message conveying his regret to hamlet inhabitants for damage caused by the aircraft.

Bien Hoa. VNAF and TARP funds were used for reconstruction and roofing of approximately 160 off-base dependent houses which had been damaged or destroyed. Materials obtained from the Long Binh salvage yard were also used in repairing these houses.

Da Nang. The VNAF 41st Wing, working jointly with U.S. military organizations, distributed commodities, and restored an estimated 142 destroyed or damaged homes in four hamlets located south of Da Nang. In addition, clothing and food were collected for displaced and homeless victims in Hue.

Nha Trang. Approximately 300 VNAF personnel assisted in clearing debris from the destroyed area of the city and constructing sanitation facilities for

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refugees.

Tan Son Nhut. The 33d VNAF Wing managed the 6,000-population Binh Tay Refugee Camp at Cholon. The Wing's personnel also constructed housing at the Petrus Ky Refugee Center for 200 refugee families, airlifted emergency medical supplies to Hue, and participated in reconstructing 13 hamlets.

All projects assigned to 7AF bases were completed or initiated by 30 June. Base Civic Action officers were therefore instructed to again channel their efforts and resources toward conducting a "traditional" Civic Action Program. During the five-month period, the following actions were accomplished by 7AF bases: <sup>15/</sup>

Services Furnished

Refugees assisted	60,000
Refugees airlifted	3,413
Commodities airlifted	72 tons
Commodities transported	60 tons
On-base care for 998 refugees	1,360 man days
Emergency food/shelter 118, 3d country nationals	826 man days
Loan of 60 KW generator to Province Hospital	

Rebuilding

Homes rebuilt/repaired	6,014
Schools rebuilt/repaired	8
University rebuilt	1
Hamlet Hq	2
Market place	1
Training building	1
Bridge bypass	1
Cleared war damage debris in Nha Trang	



Funds

P456 (Approved by 7AF)	\$ 85,481.02
TARP - Voluntary Donations	\$ 20,578.45
	\$VN118,945.00
Other	\$VN286,050.00

Commodities Distribution

Food	21,000 Pounds
Rice	14,000 Pounds
Clothing	6,300 Pounds
Soap	255 Pounds
Pesticide	75 Gallons
Candles	10,000
Bedding (cots, blankets, mats, etc.)	500

Material Support Provided

Lumber (Reclaimed and New)	958,100 Bd ft
Roofing	950 Sheets
Roofing Tar	750 Gal.
Cement	560 Bags
Nails	570 Pounds
Roofing	8 Rolls
Wire	18 Rolls
Culvert	48 Ft.
Tents	
16 Man	218
Shelter Half	4,200
Hootches	14
Canvas	1,200 Yds.
55-Gal. Drums	670

Support to Regional and Popular Forces, such as food, supplies, lumber, and the like, were not included in these statistics. Neither did they include equipment such as desks, tables, chairs, and other miscellaneous equipment to refurbish village/hamlet headquarters, and schools.

Underscoring the need to return to nation-building, the following commitments from CORDS were furnished in June: <sup>16/</sup>



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*"The hard-core of the Revolutionary Development effort is not to provide an assortment of goodies, be they cement, artifacts or social services to the people. The hard-core of the RD Program is to win the people over to the point where they will obey, trust and participate in their own government. Humanitarian activities, while having an immediate civic action effect is, for our political and social purposes, quite irrelevant to the larger aim of the GVN. In fact, where civic action has taken place in a context that draws popular attention from GVN efforts, or tends to provide an unfavorable comparison between the GVN and American presence, civic action may be actually counter-productive to the American presence in Vietnam."*

In June, 7AF commanders were also instructed by the Chief of Staff to place greater emphasis on encouraging the Vietnamese to help themselves and to channel AF aid through local officials. <sup>17/</sup>

The importance of properly coordinating all Civic Action Programs was further emphasized by the 7AF Commander, who issued the following policy statement: <sup>18/</sup>

*"Second only to combat operations, the capabilities and energies of 7AF will be used to implement a positive civic action program at each airbase in South Vietnam. Each commander will conduct a civic action program designed to support and complement the GVN Revolutionary Development Program. Civic action programs will be coordinated with the GVN through Province or Autonomous City CORDS Senior Advisor to insure that GVN authority and responsibility are not circumvented. Such coordination will insure that projects fill an important local need and are conducted in a manner to identify the people with their government."*

Civic Action Teams, by virtue of their frequent travels in local areas near U.S. bases, had an unusual opportunity to observe conditions, establish

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rapport with local inhabitants and officials, and thereby collect information of intelligence value.

Although it was not considered desirable to formalize intelligence as a Civic Action secondary responsibility, because of the possibility of reducing the program's effectiveness with the people it was designed to help, degrading its credibility or confirming VC propaganda, 7AF did believe that its value as an intelligence collector medium should not be overlooked. Consequently, 7AF directed Wing/Group Senior Intelligence Officers to establish an informal working relationship with their base Civic Action Officers. As a guard against jeopardizing the Civic Action Program, the following guidelines were established:<sup>19/</sup>

*"The Civic Action Officer should be made clearly aware of local procedures for reporting intelligence. He should be apprised in general of the kind of information that is of value. He should not, however, be tasked with specific intelligence collection functions. The guiding and overriding principle must be that you do nothing to jeopardize or hinder the Civic Action Program's primary responsibility."*

Following the Tet recovery phase, the 7AF Civic Action Program continued<sup>20/</sup> to emphasize self-help by Vietnamese communities and individuals to:

- Enhance the dignity of the individual.
- Improve the standard of living of the people.
- Develop and utilize indigenous capabilities and potential.
- Stimulate progress toward local self-sufficiency and reduce dependency upon outside agencies.
- Foster the personal identification of the people with their projects.

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- Engender the desire to defend their accomplishments from Viet Cong incursion.
- Promote the affiliation of the populace with their duly constituted government at all levels.

Direction was initiated to align individual projects in hamlets toward a community development objective. Increased support of VNAF and RVNAF self-improvement and Civic Action activities was provided. The Accelerated Pacification Campaign was announced by the GVN in October 1968 to be effective for three months, from November 1968 through January 1969. Increased coordination with Province and District officials in Civic Action operations was stimulated by the institution of this program. MACV and GVN directives concerning the campaign were passed to the field for guidance and implementation. The Commander, Seventh Air Force, by personal message to all Commanders, directed full USAF support of local pacification efforts consistent with combat operational requirements. Military Civic Action and Psywar Fund authorizations for each USAF base were increased from \$VN100,000 to \$VN250,000. For the first time, Base Commanders were authorized to approve Civic Action projects involving use of appropriated funds up to \$1,000. This authority permitted rapid response to local CORDS/GVN requirements. Overall, better results were realized and closer relationships existed between USAF elements and CORDS/GVN officials at Province/District level, as they progressed toward mutual objectives. Significant progress was made in these areas: <sup>21/</sup>

Refugee: Material support was furnished to assist GVN officials in aiding refugees. Roads were repaired; lumber was provided for construction and improvement of housing; dispensaries were provided; and a water system was

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installed. More than 1,800 pounds of clothing were distributed, and 40 tons of rice were transported to a refugee holding center. Technical assistance was provided in establishing a youth agricultural group; material support was furnished for constructing pig pens.

Chieu Hoi: Material support and technical assistance were provided Chieu Hoi centers in Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Bien Hoa Provinces. Material for construction included lumber for 100 houses; five tons of reinforcing wire for offices; 370 feet of pipe for an irrigation system; chicken wire for eight rabbit hutches; and lumber for eight two-story pig pens. Material for vocational training included four mechanical mules, a tent for an automotive course, 7,400 board feet of scrap lumber for a carpentry course, and 300 meters of cloth for a sewing course.

Health and Sanitation: Seventh Air Force activities in support of GVN objectives to improve health and sanitation consisted of Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) teams, material, and technical assistance. MEDCAP teams gave immunizations, dental and medical treatments, and instruction in personal hygiene. Immunization records were prepared and presented to recipients. Training of ARVN and civilian medics was especially effective at Phu Cat where MEDCAPs and training were conducted at a permanent dispensary close to the base. The following is a summary of MEDCAP activities for the last quarter of CY 68:

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<u>BASE</u>	<u>MEDICAL</u>	<u>DENTAL</u>	<u>IMMUNIZATIONS</u>
Bien Hoa	2,052	863	0
Binh Thuy	816	705	180
Cam Ranh Bay	3,708	443	5,534
Da Nang	429	494	0
Nha Trang	839	637	30
Phan Rang	1,376	711	0
Phu Cat	22,543	2,107	1,880
Pleiku	381	394	1,193
Tan Son Nhut	11,573	6,582	5,577
Tuy Hoa	2,415	0	0
	<u>46,132</u>	<u>12,936</u>	<u>14,394</u>

MEDCAP activities continued to increase every month. The amount of increase for the command from 1967 to 1968 was as follows:

	<u>MEDICAL</u>	<u>DENTAL</u>	<u>IMMUNIZATIONS</u>
1967	9,066	1,880	1,888
1968	125,518	39,112	63,080

Education: Material, technical assistance, and scholarships were provided in support of GVN educational objectives. There were 1,236 scholarships provided to needy and deserving students and 12 teachers' salaries were paid. English instruction was given to 1,000 high school students and 60 RVNAF personnel. Physical education instruction was given to 440 high school boys. Material aid was provided in the form of Vietnamese language books for a library supporting 320 students. Further, 160 desks, three blackboards, 850 school kits, 100 bottles of ink, and 40 sets of teaching aids were furnished to schools. Vocational training was supported with lumber for building construction and training aids including four power drills, five power saws, two power generators, two chain saws, one lathe, one drill press,

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seven sewing machines, eight fans, two water coolers, and one arc welding machine.

Agriculture: Efforts to assist GVN officials improve agricultural methods consisted of material aid and technical assistance. Material provided included lumber and wire for two model chicken coops; lumber for floodgates on a dam which improved irrigation for 6,000 people; sandbags to repair typhoon-damaged dikes, lumber to build a fish pond; and pipe to improve an irrigation system. Other activities included stocking four ponds with 2,500 fingerlings and Bien Hoa Lake with 20,000 fingerlings.

Public Works: Material, equipment aid, and technical assistance were provided GVN officials in their efforts to improve public facilities and local government. Twenty-one additional classrooms and two libraries were constructed for 2,700 students. Twenty-eight schools, affecting 5,900 students, were renovated. One dormitory was constructed for 50 students; one school was electrified. Playground equipment was furnished to three schools. One hamlet headquarters was rebuilt, and furniture was furnished to three others. Dormitories were built at the National Police Academy for Montagnards. A tiered community laundry platform was built at Da Nang. Lumber was provided for construction of furniture for a district headquarters conference room. A three-room day care center and a leprosarium guesthouse were constructed. Two hundred uniforms were furnished the Popular Forces.

Progress and accomplishments in other programs such as village and hamlet administration; dwelling construction and repair; social welfare; and youth

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projects were equally impressive. Prompt USAF response in support of the Accelerated Pacification Program engendered closer province and district relationships with the bases. This, in turn, enhanced the conduct of normal Civic Action activities. During the latter part of 1968, construction was de-emphasized except where specifically requested. Major efforts were directed toward objectivity in projects, rather than diversifying projects in many directions. Activities were correlated toward community development. Targets were people rather than things, with self-sufficiency the objective. Support of local governing elements and officials was increased as was support for indigenous military elements. Results of these efforts will have to be evaluated on a long-term basis, but evidence of effectiveness was evolving. The increased participation in self-help and self-improvement by indigenous military, and their growing awareness of Civic Action for the populace have been rewarding.<sup>22/</sup>

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## CHAPTER II

### PERSONNEL

The USAF personnel assigned to Civic Action in Vietnam came from a wide variety of backgrounds. For example, the prior assignments of staff officers at 7AF represented: a SAC scheduler, a personnel officer, and a division head who had spent the last four years in an Air Commando Squadron. On departing SEA, these individuals inevitably returned to their primary AFSC and any expertise they acquired was lost. The previous 7AF Civic Action Officer arrived in Vietnam from an ROTC assignment and returned to AFLC. The above examples were not unusual; in fact, they were representative. The officers and airmen came in "cold," and what they learned about Civic Action was lost when they left.<sup>1/</sup>

A PACAF letter to 7AF in March 1968 concurred that a requirement existed to develop an en route training program for Civic Action personnel. Further, PACAF urged USAF to adopt a training course which included psychological operations and Civic Action training. Additionally, in an effort to identify personnel who had Civic Action experience, PACAF had previously converted all of the officers positions to AFSC 0316 effective 1 July 1968. A 7AF proposal to establish a special experience-identifier code for the airmen was presented at a PACAF Civic Action conference. The reaction was favorable and the proposal was subsequently presented to USAF for adoption.<sup>2/</sup>

A concept for a primary duty Base Civic Action Team was approved by the 7AF Civic Action Council in late March 1968. In a letter on future Civic

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Action needs, a base Civic Action Officer effectively expressed the personnel problem: <sup>3/</sup>

*"...With only a two-man office it is virtually impossible to do little more than find and coordinate the projects and then tell the volunteer workers to go out and assist the people and their government. Indeed, I believe a thorough examination of many projects would even lead to a serious questioning of their value. In addition, in any program such as this, where assisting the GVN in pacification, and submission of subversive activity and teachings are of primary importance, the actual project accomplishment can count for only 25% of the job. ...As presently structured, the CA [Civic Action] people cannot advise or assist the local citizens or officials in how to best attack the other 75% [influence thoughts and beliefs toward the GVN] in a comprehensive or intelligent fashion."*

To accommodate the increased emphasis on Civic Action in support of the GVN's Revolutionary Development Program, team composition and manning justification were submitted to PACAF. PACAF advised that the requirement had been validated for each base having a Civic Action function, and 50 authorizations were reflected on the Priority List. <sup>4/</sup>

Composition of the 7AF proposed and approved Civic Action Team was as follows: <sup>5/</sup>

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AFSC</u>
Major	Base Civic Action Officer	0316
Capt	Training Officer	7524
MSGT	Site Development	55370
TSGT	Training Supervisor	75172
SSGT	Inventory Management	64550

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	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AFSC</u>
	SSGT	Construction Advisor	55250
	SSGT	Administrative NCO	70250

As can be seen, this manning constituted nearly a fourfold increase in personnel over the two-man teams, and required a total of 70 men, plus the 7AF staff. It should be noted, however, that although the 50 additional spaces have been approved, higher tactical requirements and command manpower ceilings have, to date, precluded their authorization to bases.

Another extremely inhibiting personnel factor was the lack of timely manning of Civic Action positions from the start. Some spaces remained open for more than 30 days. Of the ten bases, only four had personnel overlap in 1968. At the remaining bases, the Base Civic Action Officer position remained vacant an average of 24 days during the year. The 7AF Civic Action staff recommended a 30-day overlap for each Base Civic Action Officer and his replacement. The duty required extensive local orientation, for it was a specialized rather than a career function, and more important, tailored to the locale. For example, the problems encountered at Pleiku, with its predominantly Montagnard population, were vastly different from those at Bien Hoa, where the entire area was insecure--or Cam Ranh Bay, the so-called "happy valley" where movement was virtually unrestricted. Success was contingent upon local contacts with the populace, GVN officials, CORDS representatives, and U.S. and Vietnamese military personnel. Historical experience indicated that without overlap, a three-month period was required for the officers to become sufficiently indoctrinated to operate knowledgeably. <sup>6/</sup>

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Initially, there was no relief since the command policy did not allow overlap in any job. By the end of 1968, however, the overlap problem had eased. PACAF was requested to approve at least a week's overlap in the assignment of Civic Action Officers.<sup>7/</sup>

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### CHAPTER III

#### CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Participation by the Air Force in Civic Action during the normal course of the Southeast Asia conflict was somewhat curtailed by operational requirements. However, there was always the possibility that either a partial or complete standdown for an extensive period would permit a diversion of resources to other objectives. To take advantage of these periods, each base was directed to prepare a Civic Action Contingency Plan. The plan was to include a series of approved, high-impact projects, which would be ready for implementation. Once a cease-fire was established and extended beyond five <sup>1/</sup> days, and dependent upon local conditions, the plans were to go into effect.

Since it was extremely difficult to forecast with any degree of accuracy, the materials, men, and machinery that might be available, the submitted plans were general in nature, and most did not include a series of projects. Such specifics were dependent upon the progress of base construction and mission changes. Any projection probably had little validity in future periods. Further, the specific projects could not be forecast by either the Vietnamese or CORDS officials, because the type and degree of effort would hinge upon the existing political climate, past accomplishments, and present needs of the people. The entire program had to be harmonized with CORDS, and actually the Air Force would be requested to assist in projects selected by CORDS and GVN.

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CHAPTER IV  
MEDICAL CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM

Experience had proved that Medical Civic Action Program team visits were essential forerunners in establishing solid relationships for future Civic Action projects. This vital part of the overall Civic Action Program was designed to supplement the CORDS/USAID medical program, which included preventive medicine, environmental health, maternal child care, health education, and the renovation of provincial hospitals. Projects included training of local medical personnel, and the instruction of civilians in basic sanitation and other preventive health measures. The introduction of sophisticated medical care and treatment was avoided, unless these standards could be maintained by the GVN.<sup>1/</sup>

Vietnamese medical manpower was critically short, particularly in the countryside where one physician was available for every 100,000 people. Other medically trained personnel were similarly limited. Also, there were only 600 hospitals, dispensaries, and maternity centers with approximately 15,000 beds. Factors compounding the medical situation were: the Buddhist faith which prohibited autopsy; several hundred thousand people who had no fixed home; a monsoon season which increased waterborne disease; a deficient diet; widespread prostitution; a lack of drug laws; and a lack of security for medical people.<sup>2/</sup>

Air Force participation in the medical program consisted of: MEDCAP I, MEDCAP II, Military Provincial Health Assistance Program, and air evacuation

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of civilian war casualties. MEDCAP I was the care and treatment of civilians by Vietnamese military personnel, with the U.S. military providing professional advice and instruction. MEDCAP II was the care and treatment of civilians solely by U.S. medical personnel. This effort was limited only by the primary mission, which was to provide medical and dental support to maintain the highest possible degree of combat readiness. The Military Provincial Health Assistance Program, under operational control of MACV, was administered and supplied by USAID. It consisted of 57 medical teams which acted as advisors at provincial hospitals. The Air Force and Navy each had eight 16-man teams serving in this capacity. The Vietnamese had no inter-province, and only insignificant intra-province means to evacuate patients. Through its normal aeromedical evacuation system, the Air Force evacuated Vietnamese patients with available in-country fixed-wing aircraft.<sup>3/</sup>

All MEDCAP activities had to be carried out by the existing medical staff. On 14 May 1968, PACAF approved a request to establish a Medical Civic Action Program team at each of the ten bases; however, spaces were not available, and the 30 officers and 50 airmen spaces could be placed only on the 7AF Priority List of Outstanding Requirements and the ten local nationals on the Deferred List. The team composition for each base included the following:<sup>4/</sup>

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AFSC</u>
Captain	General Medical Officer	9326
Captain	General Dental Officer	9826
Captain	Veterinary Officer	9925
MSgt	Med Serv Spec, NCOIC	90270
Sgt	Med Serv Spec	90250
SSgt	Mil Pub Health Tech	90750
SSgt	Dental Tech	98150
SSgt	Med Admin Spec	90650
Civ (LN)	Language Spec	20330

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In addition to providing immunizations and medical and dental treatment, MEDCAP teams also distributed food items, clothing, soap, etc., during their visits. Lectures on personal hygiene and sanitation, in layman's terms, were given at every opportunity. Selected highlights of MEDCAP activity in 1968 which follow are not intended to be a complete quantification of its role, nor is an attempt made to measure the program in terms of success.<sup>5/</sup>

Pleiku AB supported indigenous medics in three Montagnard villages. Each was paid \$25 a month; however, the majority of supplies came from the Pleiku Director of Public Health. Four Montagnard health technicians received daily on-the-job training at the base dispensary. Some 684 general medical treatments and 571 dental treatments were performed in the last half of 1968. Approximately 60 percent of the populace in the Pleiku area of responsibility were immunized against tetanus, smallpox, and plague. An X-ray unit was installed in Pleiku city, and the local doctor's ability to test the prevalence of tuberculosis increased 100 percent.

The program at Phan Rang called for expanded efforts in dentistry. After the Tet Recovery Program began, some 990 dental patients were treated in 20 different locations throughout the province. The people responded well to the Preventive Dentistry Program, as evidenced by the number of patients. In addition, the medical teams gave technical guidance training to 24 hamlet health workers, who otherwise would have received only minimum first aid training.

At Nha Trang, more than 5,000 patients were treated by doctors and

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dentists in 1968, and medical supplies valued at more than \$28,000 were distributed. In December, a leper colony north of the base was contacted, and arrangements were made to treat 335 lepers. MEDCAP was expanded out of the immediate Nha Trang area, as exemplified by the building of a dispensary at Cam Lam District Headquarters. The labor was provided basically by the Vietnamese, while the USAF provided numerous medical supplies.

Training of Vietnamese military and civilian medics was particularly effective at Phu Cat AB, where instruction was conducted at a permanent dispensary close to the base. Funds to provide daily transportation for the students were also provided. Students received no other reimbursement and could not have attended without this assistance. The program provided the advantages of establishing patients' records for continuity of treatment and impact upon a wider segment of populace. Patients came from as far as 50 miles away for treatment. Ultimately, the facility was to be operated solely by Vietnamese.

The following extract from a Phu Cat AB report attested to the overall effectiveness of the MEDCAP program: <sup>6/</sup>

*"The Medical Civic Action Program is in itself proving to be a potent psychological warfare weapon. Subsector advisors have informed us that according to their estimates, some of the hamlets in which we have worked, at least fifty percent of the population are either Viet Cong, Viet Cong sympathizers or families of Viet Cong. They have further noted that following a MEDCAP visit there has often been an increase in returnees to the hamlet, an increase in ease with which intelligence can be obtained and an increase in the effectiveness of the Popular Forces work in that particular area. Although full credit for this progress cannot be attributed*

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*to MEDCAP activities, it is strongly felt that overt psychological warfare activities carried on at the same time with MEDCAP would be otherwise self-defeating. A program which is operated on a strictly humanitarian basis is much more effective in penetrating the obvious barriers."*

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## CHAPTER V

## ACCELERATED PACIFICATION EFFORT

COMUSMACV, in his Operational Guidance message for the last quarter of 1968, stated:<sup>1/</sup>

*"Indications are that the enemy is currently devoting effort to expanding the VC cadre and infrastructure, and may be forming new VC local battalions so that he will be in position to take advantage of a situation that he may try to bring about himself by asking for a cease fire. We can't afford to let the enemy succeed in carrying out such a plan. We must not, repeat not, get ourselves into a position where we can lose the war strategically after having defeated the enemy on the battlefield."*

Accordingly, each commander was requested to expand his spoiling and pre-emptive operations. These instructions were in consonance with the overall campaign plan for conduct of the war in Vietnam. They did not change any goals, but rather were an expansion of activities across the board, so that all available forces (including military, paramilitary, and civilian) could be brought to bear simultaneously against the enemy.<sup>2/</sup>

Major targets were the destruction of the VC infrastructure and achievement of pacification objectives. Once the enemy's infrastructure was eliminated and pacification had taken hold, COMUSMACV believed it would be difficult for the VC to revive himself within the climate of confidence that successful accomplishments would generate.<sup>3/</sup>

Regarding operational guidance for the fourth quarter of 1968, COMUSMACV stated:<sup>4/</sup>

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*"There's more freedom of movement throughout Vietnam today than there's been since the start of the U.S. build-up. Friendly units are operating in areas in which they've never been before."*

Another point that was evident in the enemy's operational pattern was his basic understanding that the struggle in Vietnam was just one war. <sup>5/</sup>

*"He knows there's no such thing as a war of big battalions, a war of pacification, or a war of territorial security. Friendly forces have got to recognize and understand the one war concept and carry the battle to the enemy simultaneously, in all the areas of conflict. In the employment of forces, all elements are to be brought to bear against the enemy in every area, in accordance with the way the enemy does his business."*

The President of South Vietnam fully approved early initiation of vigorous offensive actions across the entire spectrum of conflict. To complement the effort, he agreed to an accelerated pacification campaign designed to upgrade hamlets. A feasibility study by the Vietnamese Joint General Staff, and the Rural Development Group was directed to be accomplished by 10 October 1968. <sup>6/</sup> Through computer programming, a sophisticated and complex analysis of conditions in the Vietnamese countryside was made. By using the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES), it was possible to evaluate hamlets for management attention and monitoring. Accordingly, approximately 1,000 contested hamlets received "C" status or above between 1 November 1968 and Tet (17 February 1969). In evaluating these hamlets, the U.S. Army advisors used a detailed worksheet consisting of 18 indicators divided equally among six factors: <sup>7/</sup>

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SECURITYViet Cong Military Activities

Village guerrilla unit;  
External forces;  
Military incidents affecting hamlets.

Viet Cong Political and Subversive Activities

Hamlet infrastructure;  
Village infrastructure;  
Activities affecting hamlet.

Security (Friendly Capabilities)

Hamlet defense plan and organization;  
Friendly external-force assistance;  
Internal security activities.

DEVELOPMENTAdministrative and Political Activities

GVN government management;  
Information/psyop activities;  
Grievances of the Residents.

Health Education and Welfare

Medical services and sanitation;  
Education;  
Welfare.

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Economic Development

- Self-help;
- Public works;
- Economic improvement programs.

Each of these indicators were then given a rating of A (best) through E (worst). The following explanations represent the general characteristics of each hamlet category, although some of the 18 responses may have been rated higher or lower than indicated by the overall average for the entire hamlet category.<sup>8/</sup>

In an "A" hamlet, VC remnants have been driven out, external VC forces are ineffective and no incidents occur; the infrastructure appears to be eliminated and no subversive activity occurs; adequate friendly defense forces exist, urban areas have adequate police day and night, there is only a slight need for external forces, and the hamlet is covered by effective internal security; an effective elected hamlet government exists, all GVN officials are resident, a resident grievance representative is in the hamlet or village, and public awareness of GVN personnel and programs exists; general public participation in adequate medical programs exists; at least 90 percent of the children receive primary education and secondary schools are accessible; welfare needs are satisfied and special benefits are being paid; some self-help projects are completed, local pride is evident, public works are underway or completed, economic programs are well advanced or not even needed, popular demands are expressed, and public participation and interest are widespread.



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In a "B" hamlet, the VC can make only desperation raids, VC bases within six hours' travel to the hamlet have been destroyed, and no incidents in the hamlet, village, or nearby have occurred during the month; all party apparatus is identified, most leaders have been eliminated, and no subversion and no incidents occur; the friendly defense force is organized and partially effective, adequate plans and communications have been prepared for its use; in urban areas there are adequate police during the day, and an effective informant system is operative; a complete GVN managerial group is resident, the hamlet chief is elected and people are participating freely in civic associations; a trained medic and midwife are accessible and at least 90 percent of the children receive primary education; all programmed self-help projects are underway, advanced economic programs have been started, and popular support and participation have increased.

In a "C" hamlet, military control of the VC has been broken, external VC units have been reduced up to 50 percent, and only sniping and mining occurs on routes to the hamlet; most party apparatus is identified, its effectiveness is curtailed, and no overt VC incidents have occurred recently; the local communications system is operative, urban areas have inadequate police during the day, friendly forces meet security requirements, and hamlet chiefs are receiving useful information from informants; GVN managerial groups are usually present at night, the census grievance program has been completed, and civic associations are being developed; full-time medical support is rendered by external teams, formal full-time education is available, and some welfare needs are being met; economic programs are underway, people are interested and

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have given their consent to self-help projects, and some participation has been achieved.

In a "D" hamlet, VC military activities have been reduced and external VC forces have been reduced up to 25 percent, but there is VC activity in the hamlet at night; some VC cadre have been eliminated, VC leaders have been neutralized, but terrorism and taxation occur during the month; day and night defenses by friendly external and popular forces exist and voluntary informants are increasing; local participation in hamlet management has begun, a census grievance program has started, and local officials occasionally respond to popular aspirations; MEDCAP visits are scheduled periodically, some formal education is available, and initial welfare activity has begun; and economic development has been initiated, and planning for self-help projects has started.

In an "E" hamlet, VC military, political, and subversive activities exist, infrastructure is operating and VC terrorism and taxation occur; friendly security capabilities are inadequate and night defenses are lacking; GVN administrative activities are temporary, appointed officials are ineffective, and usually are present only in the daytime; health, education, and welfare programs are nonexistent; and no economic development is in progress.

An "Other" hamlet is one which is abandoned (contains no population but the hamlet name is maintained on the GVN roster), planned, or not evaluated.

A "VC" hamlet is one under Viet Cong control, and therefore is not evaluated in terms of the 18 questions.

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HES was typical of other evaluation systems in that its accuracy, and consequently its value, were totally dependent upon the evaluator's access to information and his judgment in using this information. Although the Air Force did not participate directly in the evaluation of hamlets, the Base Civic Action Officers were advised of the category assigned the hamlet.

The tentative MACV position was that upgrading 100 contested hamlets in I Corps, 250 each in II and III Corps, and 400 in IV Corps was possible during the three months prior to Tet, if all available Regional and Popular resources were stretched. U.S. Senior Advisors were requested to encourage positive and productive reactions from the corps commanders during the upcoming Joint General Staff meeting. <sup>9/</sup>

President Thieu contemplated a pacification-and-development program embracing all elements of pacification, not just revolutionary development. He wanted to place primary stress on contested hamlets, where a solid security presence might be established, along with a skeletal organization of the people, through elections or appointment of local officials. Simple, self-help development efforts were envisioned for VC controlled hamlets, along with military presence supported by Civic Action. <sup>10/</sup>

COMUSMACV was confident the study would show it was feasible, with additional forces eventually being added: <sup>11/</sup>

*"In order to extend momentum of successful military campaign into these additional fields request commanders make every effort to support this step-up of pressure on the enemy. This will secure strategic initiative in these as well as strictly military field,*

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*which is essential to the satisfactory accomplishment of our objectives and frustration of enemy ambitions."*

As predicted, the feasibility study was positive and on 11 October, President Thieu issued the "Directive for Pacification and Reconstruction for 1969."

<sup>12/</sup>  
In his estimate of the situation, he commented:

*"From the start of 1968 to the present, the communists have been striving for rapid achievement of their aggressive aims in South Vietnam by military victories in the battlefield in order to win the war at the negotiating table. However, they have completely failed in their military efforts. As a result, they have not dared to negotiate in a serious manner, but continue to maintain their stubborn attitude of 'fighting while negotiating' and hope that somehow they will find an escape route, by which they may retain some advantage. They do not have the capability to win the war militarily. This situation will undoubtedly force the communists to try to maintain military pressure, while concentrating on sabotage of territorial security with the hope of controlling an additional percentage of the population and territory as a bargaining factor in a political settlement and at the same time to prepare a long-range legal political struggle."*

The objective of the program was to consolidate and extend control over territory and population. A very ambitious goal was set: government control over a minimum of 80 percent of the population. This was later revised to 75 percent by 1 February 1969, and to 90 percent by the end of 1969. Territorial security was to be accomplished by consolidating a defensive system comprised mainly of Regional and Popular Forces, supported by Self Defense units. Underlying and supporting the entire effort was the statement: "These operations should be supported by Civic Action as a means to win the people."<sup>13/</sup>

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A more detailed plan named Special Pacification Offensive Plan to implement the President's direction was prepared by the Prime Minister on 19 October. Among other endeavors, its central objective was to pacify more than 1,000 hamlets categorized as "D" or "E" under the HES. The hamlet distribution was close to the MACV estimate:

<u>CORPS</u>	<u>HAMLETS</u>
I	140
II	226
III	259
IV	459
TOTAL	1,084

Hamlets previously evaluated as "A", "B", and "C" were not selected; however, hamlets that were considered pacified, but had been attacked by VC during the Tet holiday, were singled out for special attention. <sup>14/</sup>

Similar to the support forces for the Rural Development Program for 1968, the main forces assigned to the accelerated program were Sector Regional and Popular Forces. In relatively secure areas, the security protection was assigned to the Popular Forces. Regional Forces were moved into selected areas programmed for "intensive pacification activities." Also all Vietnamese forces were enjoined to assist the local people in constructing bridges, repairing houses, giving medical assistance, and organizing village festivities. <sup>15/</sup>

The objective of upgrading all contested hamlets required a diffusion of Regional and Popular Forces in areas contiguous to all ten 7AF bases. These bases each had a district headquarters as well as province or special zone headquarters within their sphere, generally considered within a ten-mile

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"rock belt" radius of the base. A reduction of pacification forces in these areas could cause VC infrastructure activity and a corresponding increase in the threat to base security. Because of this, the Commander, 7AF, directed each base to evaluate the impact of withdrawing the local pacification force, specifying that "appraisal of this potential effect upon security of bases should be continuous and [have] prompt corrective action initiated should indications so warrant."<sup>16/</sup>

In support of the accelerated program, 7AF directed local commanders to provide as much support as was possible, consistent with combat operational requirements. Increased emphasis was placed on support of VNAF Civic Action efforts. The 7AF Headquarters also suggested that current base Civic Action functions be augmented with appropriate specialists, if resources permitted without degrading combat capability. All Civic Action projects undertaken in support of pacification were coordinated with appropriate province and district officials.<sup>17/</sup>

On 1 November, the beginning of the accelerated program, 69.8 percent of the population was categorized as relatively secure. In late December, the 1969 goal was set at 90 percent, and specific guidance was given. The guideline represented the first single set of pacification guidance published to date. In general, the theme for 1969 emphasized people, not things. The following objectives and goals were established:<sup>18/</sup>

- Bring 90 percent of population to secure status.
- Reduce VC infrastructure by 33,000.



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- Organize two million people for self-defense, and distribute 400,000 weapons.
- Establish local government in all villages.
- Rally 20,000 Hoi Chanh under Chieu Hoi program.
- Reduce refugees to fewer than one million and return 300,000 to the villages (security to the people--not the people to security).
- Intensify information and propaganda.
- Stimulate rural economy.

In early January 1969, the 7AF Commander stated it was essential for each commander to understand the current air campaign out-country, as it related to the conflict in South Vietnam: <sup>19/</sup>

*"Currently MACV has an accelerated pacification campaign in progress which has as its principal objective the destruction of the communist infrastructures in South Vietnam. The success of that campaign will remove from South Vietnam any immediate political threat and will have a profound effect upon the military threat from communism. Its success will render the North Vietnamese Army relatively ineffective since it depends on the VC guerrilla so heavily in preparing for and in the conduct of combat. It is the guerrilla who guides the North Vietnamese, who prepares the battlefield by recruiting porters to pre-stock caches, to prepare bunkers, and to evacuate the wounded and bury the dead...The accelerated pacification program, therefore, could well be the final phase of conflict in South Vietnam...."*

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CHAPTER VI  
ASSESSMENT

There were no established criteria against which the 7AF Civic Action Program could be evaluated. The monthly base reports gave some indications of progress, as did the quarterly competitive ranking of base programs. All these attempts were subjective, despite efforts to maintain as much objectivity as possible.

Although statistics by themselves are no yardstick, they do provide a measure of effort. The following list depicts the USAF 1968 totals:<sup>1/</sup>

USAF Man days (10-hour day)	26,940
USAF Supplies	\$VN76,552,348
US/FWMAF Military Civic Action	\$VN 3,629,042
Voluntary Contributions	\$VN18,639,350
Other	<u>\$VN16,205,061</u>
Total	\$VN115,025,801

USAF Man days and Cost of Supplies by Category

<u>PROGRAMS</u>	<u>MAN-DAYS</u>	<u>COST OF SUPPLIES</u>
Economic Development	942	\$VN 3,680,820
Education	4,332	\$VN 10,353,511
Social Welfare	14,086	\$VN 53,624,098
Transportation	232	\$VN 589,680
Refugee Assistance	7,348	\$VN 46,777,692
Total	26,940	\$VN115,025,801



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## Average Number of Institutions Aided Monthly (Many Repeats)

Schools	45
Orphanages	34
Hospitals/Dispensaries	25
Others	<u>21</u>
Total	125

A comparison of medical statistics for 1967 and 1968 reflects the increased impact of the MEDCAP activity:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MEDICAL</u>	<u>DENTAL</u>	<u>IMMUNIZATIONS</u>
1967	9,066	1,880	1,888
1968	125,518	39,112	63,080

As mentioned previously, an accurate accounting of the VNAF participation in the Tet Recovery Program was not possible. However, they did make significant contributions in providing assistance to refugees and the local populace, as well as VNAF dependents residing on base perimeters. Although the VNAF have shown steady progress and improvement over their previous efforts in joint USAF/VNAF Civic Action projects, they have fallen somewhat short of those expected by the USAF. Since many VNAF personnel lived in communities not unlike those being helped, a low motivational factor was understandable.

By July, the post-Tet recovery efforts of the USAF were converted to local CORDS/GVN programs. In the fall, Civic Action operations were stimulated by the institution of the Accelerated Pacifications Campaign. In support of

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the new program, Civic Action and psywar fund authorizations for each USAF base were increased from \$VN100,000 to \$VN250,000. Further, for the first time, base commanders were authorized to approve Civic Action projects up to \$1,000. This expanded authority permitted rapid response to local CORDS/GVN requirements.<sup>2/</sup>

At the end of the year, however, varying security conditions continued to inhibit Civic Action operations. Also, because province and district officials did not provide programs for hamlets and villages, the bases could not do any long-range planning to assist community development. Detailed plans might allow the USAF to work toward proper objectives and provide a basis for determining priorities and use of resources.

The impact of the accelerated program had not emerged by early January 1969. At least one base reported that hamlets designated as targets for pacification had so far required only limited base assistance. They anticipated little change until a major improvement in security conditions warranted greater USAF involvement.

Achievements of 7AF's Civic Action Program stand in sharper relief when viewed against a background of the difficulties with which it had to be carried out. Among these were the austere manning of the program and its cost limitations. The bulk of "USAF supplies" figuring in this and other reports was made up of scrap and surplus, and was costed accordingly. Such figures can be misleading when used as indicators of the human effort and time attending the use of these supplies. Other difficulties were the overriding

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priority of combat operations, the battle and security conditions existing, the necessity so often to rely on volunteer efforts and, of course, the fact that in some cases more could not be done because everything depended upon the initiative of province officials.

There can be little doubt that the Air Force continued to be involved in the nation-building program and a cease-fire or standdown in Vietnam could even direct attention toward an expanded Civic Action Program. The existing base contingency plans, while attempting to provide increased work, did not reflect a central theme or objective, since they were entirely dependent upon the desires of the Senior Advisor and Province Staff.

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## GLOSSARY

ARVN	Army of Republic of Vietnam
CHECO	Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations
COMUSMACV	Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
CONUS	Continental United States
CORDS	Civil Operations Revolutionary Development Support
FWMAF	Free World Military Assistance Forces
GVN	Government of Vietnam
HES	Hamlet Evaluation System
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MEDCAP	Medical Civic Action Program
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces
PF	Popular Forces
Psyops	Psychological Operations
Psywar	Psychological Warfare
RDP	Revolutionary Development Program
RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces
TARP	Tet Aggression Relief Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Viet Cong
VNAF	Vietnamese Air Force